

December 30, 2008



Planning Department Newsletter

REVIEW OF 2008 PERMIT ACTIVITY

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In comparison to the exceptionally strong construction years of the recent past in Pullman, building permit activity was moderate in 2008. Absent any unforeseen events over the next couple days, it appears the city will finish the current year having issued permits for 57 new single family houses and 24 apartment dwellings. During 2007, the city sold permits for 96 single family residences and 173 apartments, although those numbers are somewhat skewed because 24 of the permitted single family houses last year were established as part of the Whitman Senior Estates assisted living center (i.e., they were built as part of a group quarters complex rather than standard detached dwellings on separate lots).

Based on staff's conversations with planners from other communities, the local downturn in 2008 construction activity was reflected in permit figures from jurisdictions across eastern Washington. At a recent forum held in Moses Lake, representatives from several cities and counties on

this side of the state reported that their permit activity had decreased by 40 to 50 percent over their 2007 numbers.

The table on page 2 displays Pullman building permit activity over the last ten years. The average annual number of permitted units, as derived from this table, is 73 single family houses, 157 multi-family dwellings, and three manufactured homes. The average annual valuation of new commercial and public construction is a little over \$8 million, and the average value for all permits is about \$36.6 million.

The most remarkable aspect of the 2008 data for Pullman is that there were no permits issued for new commercial/public projects. (The city did release permits for \$1.47 million worth of commercial remodels or additions, but this work is not included in the table's commercial/public valuation figures.) However, several new commercial projects are in the works, including the Wal-Mart

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Supercenter on Bishop Boulevard, a new Pullman Building Supply store to be located next door to Wal-Mart, a lab building for Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. on Hopkins Court, a retail building from Vandervert Developments L.L.C. on Bishop Boulevard near Summit Court, and office space at Davis Way for the Community Action Center. Planning staff anticipates that permits will be issued for each of these projects in 2009.

BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY FOR PULLMAN FROM 1999 TO 2008: NUMBER OF UNITS PERMITTED FOR SINGLE FAMILY (SF), MULTI-FAMILY (MF), AND MANUFACTURED HOMES (MH); VALUATION (IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS) OF NEW COMMERCIAL/PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION; AND TOTAL VALUATION (IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS) OF ALL BUILDING PERMITS					
YEAR	SF UNITS	MF UNITS	MH UNITS	COML/PUBL VALUE(\$M)	TOTAL VALUE(\$M)
1999	58	12	1	5.13	16.43
2000	50	202	4	1.38	19.93
2001	53	37	5	6.87	19.92
2002	63	180	4	7.01	28.74
2003	81	202	2	17.22	53.12
2004	87	191	5	3.48	31.11
2005	103	302	2	18.63	64.31
2006	79	244	3	11.85	61.10
2007	96	173	7	8.66	52.77
2008 (as of 12/30)	57	24	0	0.00	19.00
TOTAL	727	1567	33	80.23	366.43
NOTE: Table does not include construction at WSU.					
SOURCE: City of Pullman Building Permit Records					



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UNIVERSITY DISTRICT UPDATE

In previous editions of the Planning Department Newsletter, we described Washington State University's suggestion for a University District, designed as a means for WSU and the city to combine resources in the interest of improving public services on College Hill. After learning of some citizen concerns about the proposal during the summer, WSU held a series of public forums on this subject in October.

In an open letter to the community on December 18, President Elson Floyd stated the following:

The University District has been a topic of discussion for most of 2008, and I would like to update you on where it stands as the year comes to a close...I have listened very carefully to both the supporters and detractors of this concept. As a result, the proposed Inter-local agreement, which many of you have reviewed, will not be advanced.

However, it is still my desire to make changes that improve the quality of life for all who live in these neighborhoods, and therefore I plan to take two preliminary actions for January 2009.

I will ask the Pullman City Council to designate south of Stadium Way, east of Grand Avenue, and north of Reaney Way as the University District. No other action will be asked of the Council at that time.

Additionally, I will appoint a broadly constituted, constituent-based Board of Advisors to develop the specific definitional terms, conditions, and specific requirements for improvement of this District. Those proposals must be advanced and approved by the Board of Advisors and then the Pullman City Council prior to becoming effective. Interested parties and constituent groups will be given the opportunity to suggest specific criteria and recommendations to the Advisory Board before a plan is presented to the City Council.

A discussion regarding the revised University District proposal as outlined by President Floyd is scheduled for the City Council meeting of January 20, 2009.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Season's Greetings from those of us here at the Pullman planning department. We wish you and yours all the best as we celebrate the holidays! 2009 promises to be another eventful year in local planning, and we will do our best to keep you apprised of the activity in each edition of this newsletter.



Pending Land Use Applications

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

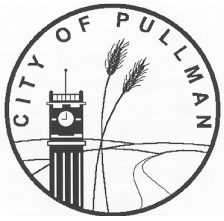
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	citywide	ad hoc committee approved draft ordinance on 12/8; PC endorsed draft ordinance on 12/17; CC meeting to review draft ordinance scheduled for 1/20
Hinrichs Annexation	annex 37 acres to the city	west of Sunnyside Park and north of SW Old Wawawai Road	applicant revising legal description of property
Kopf Annexation	annex 2.5 acres in C3 prezone for airport fire flow reservoir	north of Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport	PC recommended approval on 10/22; CC accepted proposal on 11/18; applicant preparing petition
Askins Zoning Designation (Z-08-2)	establish R3 zone for 35.8-acre parcel	along SE Johnson Avenue, 2,000 feet south of SE Old Moscow Road	PC suggested a proposed R3 zone on 12/17; PC hearing scheduled for 1/28
Whitman County Communications Tower Conditional Use Permit (C-08-3)	erect 140-foot-tall public safety communications tower	2325 NE Hopkins Court	BOA hearing scheduled for 1/26
Animal Haven site plan (03-15)	develop 12,000-sq-ft animal shelter on 6.2-acre site	1350 SE Old Moscow Road	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Well House No. 8/Booster No. 10 site plan (08-3)	construct pumping station for city potable water system	605 SE Derby Street	staff requested project engineer to revise site plan
Birch Hills Apartments site plan revision (07-14)	revise plans for 145-unit apartment complex	2200 NE Westwood Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
CAC Transitional Housing site plan (08-5)	develop 9-unit transitional housing complex on 3.8-acre site	530 NW Davis Way	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
SEL Lab Building site plan (08-6)	construct 36,000-sq-ft lab building on 2.3-acre parcel	2370 NE Hopkins Court	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list.. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.





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